



Title: Seasonal Historical Interpretive Assistant

Date: March 6, 2025

Status: Parks Seasonal (August to mid-October)

Salary Range: Starting at \$18/hour

Hours Per Week: 10-15 hours weekly

Availability: weekday, evening, or weekend

Daily work hours range: 8:30 – 5:30 (flexible)

**Job Description:** Under the supervision of a higher classified employee, the Seasonal Historical Interpretive Assistant will work with staff to plan and provide support for open house public mill tours, K-12 field trips and additional interpretive programs and special events at **Parker Mill County Park** and **Sharon Mills County Park**.

**Job duties will include, but are not limited to:** Interpreting the historical and cultural resources preserved at the parks for audiences that range from school-aged kids to adults. To improve and enrich the visitors' experience by helping them understand the significance of these historical sites to our local heritage. Other duties will include opening the mill, maintaining a welcoming environment for visitors, and maintaining and reporting records of attendance.

**Locations:**

Primary focus will be at Parker Mills County Park, additional duties may include working at Sharon Mills County Park.

Parker Mill County Park located at 4650 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Sharon Mills, located just north of Manchester at 5701 Sharon Hollow Rd, Manchester, MI

Brief history of both sites is included below.

Education: Possession of a high school diploma or equivalent; college-level course work in natural resources, interpretation, or related field preferred.

Experience: Previous experience in providing interpretive programming, education, or public engagement is desired. Formal interpretive training is preferred, through either an academic program or recognized interpretative or historical organization. Successful candidates will also display a dedicated interest in local history and heritage of our region.

Requirements: Must be 18 years of age and possess a valid driver's license and reliable transportation to and from work site.

Pass a background test.

Necessary Special Requirements: Must be physically capable of hiking on uneven ground, working outside, and lifting up to 30lbs.

Department: Parks and Recreation - Various Locations

PO Box 8465, Ann Arbor, MI 48104



APPLICATION PROCEDURE: Send cover letter and resume & Reference to:

Lauren Koloski  
Volunteer @ Education Program Supervisor  
Koloskil@washtenaw.org  
Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation  
2230 Platt Road  
PO Box 8645  
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645

### POSITION OPEN UNTIL FILLED

#### Sharon Mills:

Nestled on the banks of the River Raisin in Sharon Township, Washtenaw County, Sharon Mills County Park occupies a site where Native Americans once hunted and where a sawmill was built in the 1830s. Later a gristmill was erected and operated by John Rice and subsequently by the Kirkwood family until the late 1920s. In 1928, Sharon Mills was purchased by Henry Ford for use as a small plant. He rebuilt the mill, added a stone addition, and installed a hydroelectric generator for power. Sharon Mills became the thirteenth Ford Village Industries plant employing approximately 15 men who manufactured cigar lighters. Regrettably, Ford's Village Industries concept proved economically nonviable and the Sharon Mills plant closed in 1946. This association with Henry Ford makes this site particularly significant according to the Michigan Historic Commission. Apart from a brief period as an antique business, through the 1950s until the close of the '80s, Sharon Mills was used primarily as a private residence. Sharon Mill was listed as a State Register Historic Site in 1989. In the 1990s, the mill was converted into the Sharon Mills Winery, bottling and selling Michigan wines. When the winery closed, the family sold the mill and its 24-acre site to the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) in December 1999.

This 264-acre park also includes a 3.8-mile hiking and mountain bike trail winding through open fields and along the mill pond. The trailhead is accessible from west side of Sharon Hollow Road (north of Pleasant Lake Road) and connects to additional protected land owned by The Nature Conservancy (Nan Weston Nature Preserve) and the State of Michigan's Sharonville State Game Area, totaling more than 6,000 acres of sensitive habitat.

#### Parker Mill:

Situated on Fleming Creek just above the confluence with the Huron River, Parker Mill is the last of at least 5 former mill sites along the creek. The park was named for the Parker family who built the grist mill in 1873 (see the mill's cornerstone, N. E. corner) over the foundation of Fleming's 1824 sawmill, which had "long since gone to ruin."

In the beginning, the Parkers ground feed, primarily for their own use (with a corn cracker adapted from a nearby defunct plaster mill!) as well as for neighbors. Flour used by the family and neighbors were also ground. As most farms also had an orchard, and the Parkers were no exception, there was also a need to have a cider mill. Thus, in 1887 the Parkers built a second building, the cider mill. They pressed their own cider until the apple tree blight of the early 1900s signaled the decline of apple growing. The cider mill was not used again after 1914. After son George took over operations in 1910, the mill turned out buckwheat, whole wheat and pancake mix for local chain stores. Bags used for these flours are on display in the mill today.



In the 1980s the Washtenaw County Parks Commission purchased the site. Shortly thereafter the Commission was awarded a grant from the Michigan Land Trust Fund to be used for the restoration of the mill. Currently Parker Mill County Park contains 43 acres along Fleming Creek and includes: the grist mill and associated historic buildings; the Hoyt-Post hiking trail, and an active biking trail connecting Gallup Park to Matthaei Botanic Garden.